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August 15, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
Julius Genachowski, FCC Chairman
c/o Marlene Dortch, Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

WT 11-65: *In the Matter of applications of AT&T Inc. and Deutsche Telekom AG for consent to assign or transfer control of licenses and authorizations.*

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

I am the President of The Disability Network. We have offered many programs and support to people with disabilities in Genesee County for the past 17 years. We have fought to change attitudes and policies through advocacy and education, for the freedom of choice, opportunity and equality for all people, including those with disabilities. We believe that affordable, wireless broadband networks are instrumental in assisting Americans with disabilities to live independently, and we are committed to promoting this technology and increasing its access throughout the country.

In the proposed merger with T-Mobile, AT&T has outlined a plan to roll out high-speed wireless broadband to over ninety-seven percent of the nation. AT&T's impressive 4G network would provide Americans with disabilities the telecommunications technology needed to receive equal access and opportunity. Access to this modern technology will lead to greater innovation and advancements that allow people with disabilities to live independently, participate in society and seek out the same opportunities available to others.

In the past decade, Internet access has made a profound change in how persons with disabilities live their lives. Broadband enables low-cost, remote sign language interpreters for people who are deaf to communicate with doctors at medical appointments, allows people with mobility disabilities to participate in online education programs, and creates opportunities for people with disabilities to work from home. In fact, research shows that people with disabilities are using information and web-based technology at a higher rate than others.

I have devoted my life and career to helping those of us who have disabilities. As a person with a disability (paraplegic), I speak with some authority that access to technology is the ticket to freedom for Americans with disabilities. This merger has the potential to help people with disabilities throughout the nation gain access to technology. Please stand with us as we fight for access to these vital technological advancements.

Sincerely,



Mike Zelle
President/CEO
The Disability Network

A consumer directed organization that supports people with any type of disability through Information & Referral of Resources, Advocacy, Peer Support, ADA Consultation and I.L. Skills Support.